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# Rural Areas Development

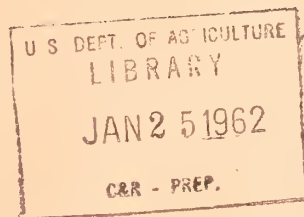
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## RURAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has launched an all-out program of Rural Areas Development, which Secretary Freeman terms "more important to the long-range future of our Nation than any other program now being conducted by the USDA."

The main objective of RAD is to stimulate more jobs and opportunities in the rural United States.

Here are some highlights of progress:

A top-level USDA RAD Board and staff are organized to get the program underway.

State and local RAD activities are underway with Farmers Home Administration, Rural Electrification Administration, and Federal Extension Service assigned the full-time job of helping local groups get started.

So far 655 rural counties and smaller labor market areas have been named as eligible to apply for aid under the new Area Redevelopment Act.

USDA rural electrification, farm credit, and small watershed work have been stepped up to make even greater resources available for rural development. Of particular importance is more dynamic use of REA loans to finance machinery in rural industries.

The Farmers Home Administration supervised credit program has been expanded to include housing loans for rural residents, larger loans for farm enlargement, more credit assistance to farmers who have off-farm employment, and a broadened program for the development of rural community water systems.

Rural Areas Development is a national task with an international impact. Today in the United States more than 36 percent of all farm families have incomes of less than \$2,000 a year. Last year, if underemployment in the Nation's farm regions were put up in terms of unemployment, there would have been 1.4 million persons in rural America unemployed.

Many new and emerging nations around the world with large rural populations are watching closely to see how well the United States solves this problem of rural "underdevelopment."

For domestic and international reasons, therefore, Secretary Freeman has given RAD top priority. In March 1961, as a first step, he established the Rural Areas Development Board representing 13 USDA agencies. In June he set up an office of Rural Areas Development to staff and coordinate RAD.

RAD program organizations, operating in most states, are helping local communities plan and organize programs.

### Area Redevelopment Act

The USDA is also helping eligible rural counties obtain benefits under the new Area Redevelopment Act. These include Federal loans and grants for public works and industrial development, technical aid, and retraining of workers, including farmers and farm workers.

Among the Department's major assignments under the act are selecting rural counties to receive assistance; reviewing area plans for development; and most important, helping local leaders put together plans and projects that will take full advantage of the new ARA program.

Rapid progress has been made in selecting rural counties for the ARA program, formulating areawide plans, and setting up local groups capable of running the program in the rural areas.

Nearly a third of the counties in the United States are covered by areas eligible for the ARA program, including 655 rural counties and smaller labor market areas. Long range economic development plans for revitalizing their economies already have been submitted for 334 counties including both rural and urban redevelopment areas. A total of 44 plans have been approved.

### Washington State

Washington is rapidly moving forward with a Rural Areas Development Program. A state committee has been formed to help organize the program on a State-wide basis. Clarence Svinth, Director of Agricultural Extension Service in Washington, is chairman. Arthur E. Garton, FHA State Director, heads a technical panel of USDA agencies, which is assisting the State RAD Committee.

Local RAD committees of business, farming, professional and other leaders have been formed in each of the counties designated for assistance under the Commerce Department's Area Redevelopment Program. In addition, meetings are being held throughout the State to help local leaders get started with an organized program of area development.

The Commerce Department has designated five labor market areas -- Aberdeen, Anacortes, Centralia, Wenatchee, and Yakima -- and six rural redevelopment counties and smaller labor market areas -- Clallam, Ferry, Jefferson, Pend Oreille, Pacific, and Stevens -- plus the Indian reservations of Colville and Yakima as areas eligible for loans and grants to aid industrial development.

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Seattle, Washington  
November 20, 1961







